

# THE BEACON

FOR SCHOOL AND HOME

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ONE SATURDAY MORNING LATE IN APRIL.

## Chickadees at Work.

BY HARRIETTE WILBUR.

**M**Y sister and I were in a Duluth park one Saturday morning late in April. The creek was running free and strong, the sun was pulling the grassblades from the ground and the leaves from their jackets, and the fern fronds were unrolling their fuzzy furs.

After a time we noticed that scraps and splinters of fresh white punk were coming down the creek. Two of them were lodged in an eddy around a rock, and others were floating past us at intervals. Curious as to where they were coming from, we went up the creek a few rods, passing several other scraps on the way. When we lost sight of the splinters, we sat down on a rock at the base of a big pine, and watched.

"So that's the secret," laughed my sister, pointing out a long-tailed, short-winged bird in cadet-gray coat and black cap, which came out from a clump of white birches across the creek, paused over the stream ten or a dozen feet high, dropped the white chip he carried in his beak, and whirled back to the birches in characteristic bobby flight. "It's a chickadee carpentering out his nest."

We trained our glasses on the birches,

but could see nothing. So we went around by the bridge and came upon the clump from an opposite direction. Then we could make out the birds, at work on a white birch tree, about five feet up the trunk where a dead branch had broken off and left an upright stub about two feet long. The little carpenter was clinging to the stump, and cutting a round little opening in the side with his sturdy beak. The hole was about half-way up the stub, and was already well started into the pithy wood. The little fellow worked until he had chipped off a good-sized scrap, then flew away with it to the creek, and dropped it into the water. He had no sooner left the stub than his mate flew down and went to work in her turn.

When the first chickadee returned, it perched on the top of the stub and advised in soft pleasant chatter to "Chip away, Chip away, Chick-a-dee-dear." And when the mate flew away with her scrap of pith, the one that had been advising and resting went to work.

We camped on a stone not far away, and watched the work proceed. About noon, the little workmen disappeared, as humans do, and they evidently laid off for the day, as we saw no more of them or of their work from that time on. When we noticed that

they were gone, we went over and examined their work. The excavation was most neatly done, as far as they had gone, and not a scrap of bark or wood and scarcely a film of sawdust was to be seen on the ground below. No one passing would have suspected what was going on in the tree, for all tell-tale scraps were safely deposited in the creek.

The hole was through the bark, and about an inch of wood, and had already started its downward trend. Four hours later we went back to look at the nest, and it was in the same condition, proving that the little workers were either taking the afternoon off or had abandoned it altogether.

The next morning, about nine o'clock, we went to the clump of birches again, and found the pair at work. We watched them for an hour or so, and it was comical to observe the progress they made, for the birds sank deeper and deeper out of sight until about noon only their rumps and long tails and wing tips were to be seen sticking from the nest.

They rested that afternoon, too, but the next morning were at it when I called at seven o'clock. Five days from the time we discovered the nest it was seven inches deep, and upon probing it with a hooked wire we brought up a good bit of creamy, matted



fluff,—the down of young fern fronds. That was all the nest contained then, that we could dig up, and that the inside was swept neat and clean was proved by the fact that none of the down we fished out showed chips or sawdust. We put the dainty mattress back and pressed it down with a twig, and hoped the parents would not notice that humans had been meddling with the nest.

The next Sunday there was an egg to be felt in the nest, and the number increased every day thereafter. We were now eager to see the eggs, and devised this plan: We sawed off the top of the stub an inch above the edge of the door, then chiseled out the center. By reflecting a light into the cavity we could see the seven rosy white eggs with their many rust-brown freckles. We hinged the stub back into place with a strip of leather, and caught it firmly down with a cord looped over a nail.

Thereafter, when we wished to spy on the brooding chickadee, all we had to do was to lay back the hinged stub and look at her. She was surprised to see us the first time we looked in on her, and plainly frightened almost out of her wits. But she kept her place, as stubborn and faithful as a setting hen, never taking her eyes off of us. We made it a point to visit the nest almost daily thereafter, and so enjoyed the nestlings all through the naked, the downy, and the feathered stages. They never liked us, however, and never failed to hiss like young steam-cocks and fluff their bodies out at us.

### An Arbor Day Task.

BY DAISY D. STEPHENSON.

*(For a small boy. He carries a tiny tree, a big spade and a small watering can. Puts them down with a big sigh.)*

I HAVE a cunning little tree,  
My father bought to-day for me;  
And now I'll plant it carefully—  
'Tis Arbor Day, you see.

Sweet blossoms it will bear some day,  
And in its leafy shade I'll play;  
Who knows but that *sometime* it may  
Bear apples fine for me?

*(Lifts spade.)*

So here's a water-can and spade—  
It's pretty heavy. I'm afraid  
Some bigger fellow should have made  
The hole to plant my tree!

*(Whistling is heard outside.)*

Oh, good! Here comes my playmate Joe!  
We'll dig real hard with spade and hoe;  
For Arbor Day's the time, you know,  
When things should planted be.

### On Arbor Day.

BY LOUISE M. HAYNES.

I SAW a little squirrel run  
Across our lawn, I thought in fun,  
Until I saw, held in his jaws,  
A big brown nut. Then with his paws  
He dug a hole and put the nut  
Away down deep, all buried, but  
I'm wondering now how he could know  
That nut into a tree would grow.  
I'd like to hear. What do you say?  
How *did* he learn 'twas Arbor Day?

### The Yellow Circus Clown.

BY BEULAH KING.

TED looked at the new dollar in his small red fist, and gave a great sigh. Ah! nobody knew but Ted how hard it had been to earn those hundred pennies. Twice he had tended store for old Peter, ten times he had run errands for lame Franz when he would have been fishing in Cronny's Creek, twice he had chased Aunt Sally's runaway cat through brush and briar, and once he had even tended Mrs. Lund's youngest and fattest! Ah! nobody knew but Ted how hard it had been to earn those hundred pennies! but at last they were his, and he flipped the bright dollar on his hard little palm and grinned and winked at his treasure!

On the shiny roundness of its surface he pictured all the wonders of a circus ring, the horses, the clowns, the dancing ladies, the clever elephants, the squawking seals, and his bright eyes shone!

A circus was coming to town, coming to Chesney, but eight miles away—eight hot, dusty miles; but Ted did not intend to reach Chesney by that road.

There was a narrow, dark path far shorter that ran through the forest and came out quite close to the circus grounds—some one had even told Ted it came out at the back of the main tent itself!

Ted had laughed. He had no use for the back of the main tent. Didn't he have his dollar to admit him to the grand-stand?

The day was fine! The birds sang, the bees buzzed, the leaves rustled!

At dawn Ted was on his way rejoicing, with pictures of painted clowns in his small brown head. There was one fellow in particular Ted had taken a fancy to. He was pictured twice on the yellow circular, once with a doll's umbrella over his shock of red hair. Each time Ted thought of it he chuckled and gave a little skip of joyous expectation of the pleasure in store for him. Once he skipped so high that the silver dollar bounced from the depths of his pocket and rolled away in the underbrush, and Ted scrambled for it!

A little bird started up from the tree trunk and fluttered away with a great noise, and a voice at his elbow said, "Ah, my little man, maybe you can help me!"

It was the kindest, jolliest voice Ted had ever heard, and when he looked around he saw a pair of twinkling blue eyes.

"Yes, sir," Ted said, his heart thumping hard.

"I have lost my way," the stranger went on. "I have been in these woods all night!"

Ted's eyes opened wide. His breath quite left him, so he did not reply.

"I want to get to Chesney, the village of Chesney."

"To Chesney?" Ted managed to gasp.

"Do you happen to know the way, bub?"

"Oh, yes, sir, I'm going there myself, but it's six long miles from here."

The stranger scratched his head. "No shorter way?"

"There is a shorter way," Ted answered, "that is, if you've got money to ride. You can walk to the next village, about half a mile from here, and take a bus to Chesney."

The stranger shrugged his shoulders. "But I haven't any money," he finished. He looked so distressed and weary that Ted's heart went out to him. "I must get to Chesney," he kept repeating to himself.

Ted swallowed hard, and, pinched the silver dollar in the depths of his pocket. There was a pause while each looked at the other and thought of different things, then Ted said with great emphasis, "If you *must* get there, I—I suppose I could let you have the money."

"You!" the fellow cried. "Ah, you *are* a fine boy!" He took out paper and pencil. "Give me your name and address and I will doubly repay you."

Ted gave them in a weak little voice. His heart was pretty faint and there were tears in his eyes.

"I wonder if you could help me get out of here," the fellow went on, "to the village, I mean."

"Oh, yes," Ted said in firmer tones. "I haven't anything else to do *now*!" The man did not seem to appreciate the emphasis on that "now."

They walked for some time in silence, Ted trying to keep back the tears. At the end of a quarter-hour they could see the shingles on the gray roofs of the houses. In the distance a train whistled, and some white smoke rose in puffs.

"There's the station," Ted explained. "You can get a fast bus there." He pointed with his thin brown finger. "I—I'll leave you now," he went on, and despite an effort his voice broke.

"All right, sonny." The man thanked him warmly and patted his little red cap. "You're all right, and you'll have your dollar in a day or two!"

Ted watched him go down the street to the station, through a mist of tears. In a moment he would be by Briggs's corner and then—

Ted shut his eyes, thinking of all this strange fellow was taking from him.

When he opened them again the fellow had stopped and was gazing toward Ted, one hand in his short jerkin pocket. Suddenly he broke into a run.

"Say, sonny," he called out, "maybe you had that money for something you wanted pretty bad, eh?"

Ted dug his toes into the soft dust. "Did you, kid? Tell me, eh? Say, you ain't crying, are you?"

Ted could endure his disappointment no longer. Sympathy had broken all courage. From his blouse pocket he pulled a crumpled piece of yellow paper whose edges were worn, and opened it to the picture of the clown.

"I—I was going to the circus," he blurted out, "to see that fellow!" He pointed to the yellow painted clown grinning beneath the doll's umbrella.

"And you shall, sonny," the stranger exclaimed, his blue eyes twinkling. "Come right along with me! I'm that very clown!" He clutched Ted's arm. "Come on!" And Ted went.

"The wider the circle of love we make,

The happier life we live;

And the more we give for another's sake,  
The more we shall have to give."

*Motto of the Junior Alliance,*

*Jamaica Plain, Mass.*

A people without children would face a hopeless future; a country without trees is almost as hopeless.

When you help to preserve our forests or to plant new ones you are acting the part of good citizens.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT.





## The Wolf of Thistle Ridge.

BY MABEL S. MERRILL.

(In Six Chapters. Chapter Fourth.)

"TIDE'S going out," said Father Winthrop, after awhile. They had a fine string of fish by this time. Even Ted had tried his luck with a line over the side of the dory and had caught two good ones. Mr. Carroll rolled up his line as Father Winthrop made this remark.

"Yes, it's time we were going," he said. "The tide will last us till we get well down into the middle of the marsh, then we'll stay and dig till the water is high enough for us to come back."

They stopped opposite a rough bushy island, a marsh island—that is, there was hardly any water around it at low tide. It stood now in a great bed of bare mud which Mr. Carroll said was the best clam bed he knew. They pulled the dory up on the shore of the island, then everybody took a hoe and the clam hunt began. The mud seemed to be full of the fat shell-fish. Every minute a jet of water would rise like a little fountain from the mud, and the one who could strike a hoe down quickest was sure of his prey.

The girls thought it great fun and even Ted soon learned to do his share. Kerry had been clamming before, and so had Father Winthrop, while Mr. Carroll was quite an old hand at the business. With so many good diggers they had a load of clams long before it was time to start for home.

"We'll build a fire on the rocks and roast some in seaweed for our own dinner," suggested Mr. Carroll. "Now if you girls can find some water up on the island while we get the fire going we can have dinner all the quicker. There's a spring up behind that clump of spruces."

They found the spring without any trouble and Avis was filling the pail, a dipperful at a time, when a little cry like the cry of a baby close beside her almost made her fall into the water.

"It's a lamb," cried Elsie, as she peered about among the long ferns that grew around the spring. "Oh, the poor little thing! he's hurt."

The lamb had somehow got one leg under the root of an old tree, and in trying to get it out had broken it; at least it hung limp and helpless and the little creature cried pitifully as Elsie took it in her arms.

"There must be somebody living on the island, though Mr. Carroll never said so. Or else it's used for a pasture. Let's go and look." Avis set the pail of water in a shady place, and they made their way quickly out of the bushes.

They were astonished to find that on the other side of the island a broad slope running down to the marsh was covered with sheep feeding, or trying to feed, on the scant grass.

"Wouldn't you think they'd starve to death?" cried Avis, indignantly. "Look, there's a little black building like a pirate's house down among those willow trees. I suppose somebody lives there and the lamb belongs to him. We shall have to carry it down, though he doesn't deserve to have it."

They made their way down to the little black building and found that it was a small barn with a tiny house adjoining. A man came out to meet them as he saw them coming along the path. He seemed to live here all alone on the marsh island.

"Leg's broken," he declared as he examined the lamb. "Now I don't know who's got time to tend a sick sheep. I'm going to Gull Islands to-morrow for a week's fishing. May be off a good while if I make up my mind to go further. What'll I do with you, young one? You ain't good for bait, as I see."

Then, as he saw how carefully Elsie held the little creature, he added: "I expect you young ladies wouldn't be willing to take him home and bring him up for a pet?"

"Father could set his leg as good as new, and Ted would just go out of his head, he'd be so pleased," Avis declared.

It was settled in a few minutes, and the man went back with them to the spring and carried the pail of water down to the boat for them. Elsie would not trust anybody but herself to carry the lamb. While the visitor was talking with Father Winthrop, Kerry came hurrying over to where the girls were getting ready to make coffee by the fire on the rocks.

"Look here," he whispered, "you girls hit a great streak of luck! That man hasn't got any pasture for his sheep and he's bargaining with dad now to have us take the whole flock up home to Uncle Si's big pasture. We're to keep them all summer and take three good ones for our pay. A cow and three sheep! Say, we'll be tiptop farmers first thing we know. Mr. Carroll and Shep and I are coming down to-morrow to drive up the flock."

Dinner was delayed a little by Father Winthrop's stopping to bind up the lamb's leg while the girls made a bed for it in the boat out of the old coats and wraps they had brought. Then the clams came out smoking hot from their blanket of seaweed,

the roasted fish was dished up on a clean board, coffee was poured and they had a feast on the shore with the sheep owner for a guest. He seemed a good sort of man, and Avis had to take back her first hard opinion of him when she found that he had been taking good care of the sheep in his barn all winter, but now that his supply of hay was used up and the fishing season was at hand he was just starting out to find a place to get the sheep pastured for the summer.

They felt quite rich when at night they climbed the long slopes of Thistle Ridge with their spoils. Elsie held the lamb in her lap and Ted sat where he could "see it every minute." To him that lamb was something too good to be true; he seemed to be afraid it would vanish like a fairy creature. They left a good load of clams at Handy Thompson's and he promised to come up to plow and get their land ready for planting.

Mother Winthrop held up both hands when they rushed into the kitchen with a big string of fish and a half-bushel of clams "for breakfast," so they said.

"We shall know where to go when we're hungry after this," shouted Kerry.

Within the next few days the plowing was done and then the question of fertilizer came up again.

"It costs a lot to buy it, but of course we can't raise much without it," argued Kerry. "In the agricultural course last year we had a formula for making it, but the materials would cost more than we could afford, I guess."

The idea of making fertilizer stayed in the boy's mind, however, and in a few days he wrote a letter to his former teacher, asking some questions about it. An answer came back at once that the students in the agricultural course were discouraged with their experiments, but that he, the teacher, was anxious to prove to them that they could mix fertilizer successfully and save something doing it. He remembered Kerry's work of the year before, and he offered to send up a quantity of material for nothing if his former pupil would try to prove to the satisfaction of the students that the thing could be done.

Kerry joyfully agreed to try, and the samples of his work which he was soon able to send down quite satisfied the principal of the school. "It seems as good as you can buy and you've made it cost less," he wrote. "Now go ahead and use it on your land and let us know the result next fall."

So the crops were planted; they had a shower of garden seeds from the scattered neighbors who were beginning to get interested in the new farmers on that abandoned place at the top of Thistle Ridge. They planted a whole acre of potatoes, and a good supply of such vegetables as would be a substantial help towards their living next winter.

"If we're not here we shall be somewhere and can take our crops with us," said Kerry. "Of course Uncle Silas won't turn us out unless something happens to make him want to come back here to live himself."

They made a fine garden on the south slope near the house, and put in string beans, cucumbers, and all the vegetables for summer use. Elsie's specialty was sweet-corn, early and late varieties. Avis had declared her intentions of raising sunflowers for the four hens Captain Thad had sent down to her, and she already had a bed of lettuce





# THE BEACON CLUB

OUR PURPOSE: Helpfulness.

OUR MOTTO: Let your light shine.

OUR BADGE: The Beacon Club Button.

Writing a letter for this corner makes you a member of the Beacon Club. Address, The Beacon Club, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

SYRIAN UNITARIAN MISSION,  
BOSTON, MASS.,  
52 Tyler Street.

Dear Miss Buck,—I am thoroughly enjoying the opening prospects of this helpful Mission. I am the oldest boy in the Mission. I am fourteen years old. I enjoy reading the lovely stories in *The Beacon*. We have a Syrian school in the Mission. I have been in the Mission since it started. My teacher's name is Mr. Roy Denden. I read the Bible in Arabic at the Mission. I go to Sunday-school. My teacher's name is Miss Lillibridge. I love to come to the Mission. Miss Lillibridge is going to start a Boy's Club for us. I should be pleased to have a Beacon pin. Some of the "Songs" are "Abide with me" and "Day by Day."

Yours Sincerely,  
FRED ABOOZBEEB.

BOSTON, MASS.,  
52 Tyler Street.

Dear Miss Buck,—I am twelve years old. I go to the Syrian Unitarian Mission. I enjoy it very well. We meet Miss Lillibridge every Wednesday and Friday. And on Sunday we learn all our holy hymns. We are making this Mission greater and greater every week, and we children are very glad to

by the shed doorstep that was furnishing salads for the table.

Of course they made all sorts of mistakes which they remedied as well as they could and reflected that they would know better next time. They had to work a great many hours when they would have liked to play, and there were times when they felt discouraged and homesick and wished they had never heard of Thistle Ridge. But Father Winthrop was getting better every day, and meantime they were keeping the wolf from the door. "Fact is, we haven't seen hide nor hair of him since we came," Kerry would say. "The nearest we came to making his acquaintance was that morning after we got here when we hadn't anything but a barrier of flapjacks to keep him away."

Before the planting was quite finished, on the very last day of April, something happened which for a time put even farming interests out of their heads.

Ted was missing one afternoon, and when they looked for him they found that the little pet lamb, "Miss White," as they called her, was gone too.

"She ran away," guessed Avis, "and Ted went to hunt for her. He just can't bear to have that lamb out of his sight. Elsie and I will go and look."

They went off towards the pasture, but they were gone so long that Kerry started after them. Then Mr. Carroll, who had come over to give Elsie her lesson, started after all four of them, for he could see that Mrs. Winthrop was getting anxious.

He found them at the top of a ledge at the far end of the pasture, peering down over the rocks at something on a lichened bank below. That something was Ted with

enjoy it. I would like to belong to the Beacon Club. Good by.

Yours Sincerely,  
MARY KOCOZIAN.

BOSTON, MASS.,  
10 Hudson Street.

Dear Miss Buck,—I am well and hope you are the same. This Mission is the best Mission I ever heard of. We learn prayers and holy songs. Miss Lillibridge is my teacher. She visits our mothers and fathers. One Sunday there was a visitor. The visitor brought us some pictures.

I am twelve years old. In the middle of June we are going on a picnic, if we live.

Yours truly,  
ROSE MALOOF.

Other members of this Syrian Mission whom we are glad to welcome as members of our Club are Zarifa Kocozian, Libbie Maloof, James and Mavid Dybes.

New members in Massachusetts are: Helen Foster, Arlington; Margaret Benjamin, Bernardston; Clifford A. Drew, Haverhill; Barbara Ballard and Warren Hadley, Lexington; Joan Burnham, Newton Centre; F. Geraldine Hanson and Esther Williams, Quincy; Kenneth Hubbard, Springfield; Alice Brown, Worcester.

"Miss White" snuggled up in his arms. The lamb had slipped over the ledge, and when the child had discovered her, quite unhurt, but crying piteously, at the foot of the rocks, he had climbed or slid down the steep place after her. He was in no danger, but he could not climb back up the rock without leaving the lamb, and that he would not do. So there he sat, hemmed in by dense thickets which prevented his going around the foot of the ledge, while a steep rock barred his way in front.

"It's a job for two. I'll go with you, Kerry," laughed Mr. Carroll, and together they went down the face of the ledge. "Miss White" consented to let Kerry tuck her under his arm, and he started back up the ledge with her, using his feet and his free hand for climbing. When Ted saw that his pet was safe he made up his mind to follow by himself, sticking his small toes into the footholds Kerry found for him. So there was nothing for Mr. Carroll to do, after all, except to climb up after them.

Instead of doing so, however, he began crawling about the rocks on hands and knees, and at first he made no answer when Kerry asked him what he had found.

"Wait a minute and I'll tell you," he called up to them, and began hammering and picking at the rock, while they stood and watched him from above. Presently he climbed up the ledge and showed them something he was holding between his thumb and forefinger.

"If it wasn't on your land instead of Professor Brown's," he said slowly, "I should think we'd found the feldspar mine he was so sure about. Anyway, there's feldspar down there and a lot of it."

(To be continued.)

## RECREATION CORNER.

### ENIGMA LXVIII.

I am composed of 12 letters.  
My 3, 4, 11, 7, is a part of the body.  
My 5, 10, 9, is a rod.  
My 1, 11, 2, 3, is a part of a foot.  
My 12, 11, 7, is the opposite of begin.  
My 6, 3, is an exclamation.  
My 8, 6, 7, is a kind of fish.  
My whole is a character from Irving.

SHERMAN KENT

### ENIGMA LXIX.

I am composed of 14 letters.  
My 5, 4, 1, is not well.  
My 3, 13, 14, is the opposite of daughter.  
My 8, 9, 10, 2, is where I go after school.  
My 7, 9, 10, is a boy's nick name.  
My 12, 7, 6, 11, is what we do when we walk.  
My whole is the name of the author of this enigma.

### CHARADES.

I.

My first is useful to the earth; my second is worn and was once used in war; my whole is seen in the sky.

II.

My first is an animal; my second is an article; my third is used every day; my whole is a place for the dead.

III.

My first is a weapon used in war; my second lives in the water; my whole is a large species of sea fish.

*Youth's Companion.*

### HOMONYMS.

Insert words spelled differently but pronounced alike.

1. — sand was strewn upon the race —.
2. The soldier hid his — in a huge wine —.
3. Tom put up a small — tent and began to — the neighborhood.
4. The — of the battleships knew the — was to be a long one.
5. The man was allowed to go to the prisoner's — to — his goods.
6. Harold was off to pay the amount — before the — was off the grass.
7. The perfume Grace — had a refreshing — and cost not one —.
8. After Sarah sifted the — she went out to weed the — bed.

*The Myrtle.*

### ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN NO. 28.

ENIGMA LXIII.—Thomas Jefferson.  
ENIGMA LXIV.—Ferdinand Magellan.  
CHARADE.—Easter Rabbit.  
SQUARE WORD.—KISS

IDOL  
SOLO  
SLOW

TWISTED TREES.—1. Balsam. 2. Juniper. 3. Alder. 4. Chestnut. 5. Hickory. 6. Linden. 7. Magnolia. 8. Locust. 9. Cypress. 10. Hemlock.

## THE BEACON.

REV. FLORENCE BUCK, EDITOR

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